

CONTEMPORARY HISTORICAL VEHICLE ASSOCIATION, Inc

OLD CARS AND NEW LAWS

PLUS WHAT SUUP HERE AND THERE

by Larry Becker



A thought to ponder! Why is the time of the day with the slowest traffic called rush hour???

The EPA is considering a proposal to increase ethanol content to 30%, and pushing car manufacturers to tune their engines with higher compression ratios to better burn E30. (Information from an article by Daniel Strohl of Hemmings on May, 17th, 2013.)

In late April, Federal regulators issued guidelines aimed at making it tougher for drivers to become distracted by the navigation or information systems on cars. The guidelines issued by the National Highway Safety Administration are voluntary, although widespread adoption is likely. Car companies are urged to restrict any system that lets driver's push buttons or otherwise manually input addresses or other data while the car is moving. Voice activated systems are preferred. The government does not plan to penalize automakers that do not meet the guidelines once they take effect in three years. But liability concerns may play a role in the company's decisions.

More and More states are finding ways to charge fees on hybrid vehicles to make up for lost revenue from gasoline sales. Virginia is the latest state to start charging a fee - \$64 a year.

Washington is one of the states that has added a \$100 fee registration on all-electric vehicles. Legislation that would levy a fee or tax on “greener wheels” is now pending in Texas, Massachusetts, New Jersey and Arizona.

Senators are debating over self-driving cars that will hit the market by the end of the year. The questions facing the senators are: what training and licensing should be required to operate a self driving vehicle, who’s liable in an accident a vehicle is on autopilot – the car’s owner or the manufacturer, what if a self driving car runs a stoplight? Who gets the ticket? May a car’s occupant nap at the wheel, text or drink alcohol if the vehicle is driving itself? These are just some of the questions facing lawmakers in regard to self driving vehicles. At present, only three states, California, Florida and Nevada, have authorized testing of driverless vehicles on their roadways and have started drafting up-to-date regulations.

The federal government is considering a proposal to lower the blood-alcohol level from .08 to .05 % for DUI standards. The proposal, if passed, would have to be enacted by all of the states and that could take years to do so.

Many cities are adding the so called Smart Parking meters. This allows city’s to change parking prices at different times so hours of high demand, such as weekday mornings, could be charged at a higher rate. On the plus side, the meters accept credit or debit cards, or any city run payment program, and it would also allow internet connectivity to allow parked motorists to receive a text message or email before a meter runs out or to accept payment via a cellphone, like an iphone or Android-based app.

Not all of the following state bills are laws at this time. They have recently been introduced and are under consideration by the respective legislatures.

ALABAMA

Starting in July, motorists driving into Montgomery will be greeted by a 42-foot wide, full scale, steel replica of the Wright Brothers flyer hovering overhead. The Wrights opened the nation’s first civilian flying school at Maxwell Air Force Base.

ARIZONA

The rugged washboard leading tourists to the Grand Canyon Skywalk is getting paved. The Hualapai Tribe awarded a \$25 million contract to finish paving 9 miles of Diamond Bar road.

Phoenix Mayor Gregg Stanton wants the city to spend \$1.5 million of state transportation funding on making the city more bicycle friendly by adding bike lanes and launching a bike share program, The Arizona Republic reports.

ARKANSAS

State lawmakers and SEMA have helped to amend legislation that originally threatened to ban any covering that reduced the visibility or required motor vehicle lighting. Under the amendment, which has been approved and signed into law by Gov. Beebe, those coverings would be prohibited only when required lamps are in use. The original bill could have been misinterpreted to include such items as removable ornamental lamp covers, which are often used for shows, exhibitions and street use during day light hours according to SEMA.

CALIFORNIA

SB 289 would make it illegal to drive if the driver's blood contains any trace of drugs, including cocaine, heroin, marijuana and pain killers, is stalled in the state Senate. Sen. Lou Correa, the bill's author has agreed to rework the language so that it is not so broad.

There are still lots of problems with the new San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge span broken bolts. The legislative Analyst' Office created a panel to investigate the problems, but the panel had 7 members and it was discovered that 5 of the members had relationships with Caltrans, the Bay Bridge contractors or both. On May 21st, a report was received stating that some of the tower welds were flawed.

The latest report shows that many of the support cables are corroded and may have to be replaced. Gov. Brown has stated that the new section of the bridge will be opened when it is safe to do so and all problems are resolved.

A recently introduced bill, AB 313, would reverse existing law and make using voice operated devices and/or hands free operation to send, dictate or listen to a text based communication illegal. The bill would also require state-mandated local programs, and the cost created by the bill may not be reimbursed, despite the California Constitution requirement to do so. AB 313 states, A person shall not drive a vehicle while using an electronic wireless communications device to write, send, or read a text based on communication". It is not expected to pass.

COLORADO

The state's car dealers are disabling and donating old high-polluting cars to provide industry scholarships. Dealers are contributing vehicles (400 over the past year) to Clean the Air Foundation, which will begin accepting scholarship applications in late May.

CONNECTICUT

A legislative commission is recommending phasing out a car tax. The plan creates a ceiling on how much cities and towns can tax vehicles, starting July 1, 2014. The ceiling will drop will drop until the car tax is eliminated by 2030.

DELAWARE

Police in Dover issued more than 2,000 tickets to drivers in a two week crackdown on using handheld cellphones.

D.C. WASHINGTON

Mayor Vincent Gray has introduced a bill that would allow undocumented immigrants to get a driver's license or a city ID card.

The Taxi Cab Commission will require drivers to accept credit and debit cards by the end of August. Fares will increase slightly to offset the cost to drivers of installing card readers.

Halfway through Potholepalooza, the Dept. of transportation reported that workers have filled 2,757 potholes, eclipsing the 2,443 filled last year. The fifth potholepalooza ended on May 22nd.

Metro has launched a new weekly short trip pass that SmartTrip users can add to their cars to save money. The \$35, seven day pass is good for trips up to \$3.50 during peak hours and unlimited trips during off-peak hours.

DELAWARE

Lawrence Myslewski of Rehoboth Beach has filed a federal lawsuit challenging the town's new \$40 parking fees for motorized scooters, arguing residents do not have to pay to get parking permits for other motorized vehicles. The permit requirement was imposed amid complaints that scooter owners were driving and parking on sidewalks.

FLORIDA

State lawmakers have approved \$50 million to link 200 miles of existing bike trails across central Florida. The Florida state EPA wants to bridge 72 miles of gaps among a dozen regional trails from St. Petersburg to Titusville.

IDAHO

A Boise taxi company is converting older Mercedes Benz models to run on bio-diesel. Recab co-owner James Orr told KBOI TV reporters. Bio-diesel cars use fuel from vegetable oil and they emit less carbon dioxide than regular vehicles. The company planned to have the vehicles in use by mid- May.

INDIANA

Several rural gravel roads could be closed as officials consider how to save money on repair costs. The 15 Knox County roads have little traffic, and some don't have homes on them, highway superintendent Ron Cardinal told the Vincennes Sun-Commercial.

ILLINOIS

Parking in Chicago neighborhoods will be free on Sundays under a new agreement with Chicago Parking Meters, which run the city's parking spaces.

LOUISIANA

Voters in New Orleans have rejected a measure that would have imposed tolls on the Crescent City Connector for 20 years, the Times-Picayune reported.

The Lafayette City-Parish Council is considering a 30-day amnesty period for motorists who are late paying red-light camera fines. The Advertiser reports that some motorists owe as much as \$40,000, but most owe between \$125 and \$300.

Drivers in Lafayette have until June 30 to pay thousands of delinquent traffic camera and parking tickets without late penalties before the start of proposed stricter collection policy. The amnesty period would apply to 30,000 past due traffic camera and parking tickets.

MAINE

The only bridge observatory in the U.S. has opened for the summer season, offering 360 degree views of the Penobscot Bay Islands, surrounding towns and Mount Katahdin. The Penobscot Narrow Bridge observatory is 42 stories high.

MARYLAND

Ocean City has eliminated free parking on four streets in order to raise \$130,000. Other steps being taken to balance the budget include cuts to bus service and increased ambulance fees.

Legislation to require the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) to provide for one year, a specially designed vintage reproduction plate to qualifying vehicle owners, has been signed into law by Gov. O'Malley. Under the new law, to be eligible to receive a vintage reproduction registration plate, the vehicle must be a passenger, small truck, historic, multipurpose or street-rod vehicle.

In Ocean City, city and state highway officials have launched a pedestrian safety campaign. Last summer, two pedestrians were killed and 13 were injured, a big increase over 2011 when there were no pedestrian deaths and just 8 injuries.

MICHIGAN

The office of Highway Safety Planning has launched an ad campaign urging motorcycle riders to use fluorescent red, orange, yellow and green gear with reflective trim to be easily spotted by drivers during day and night.

MISSISSIPPI

Police in Moss Point have equipped their patrol cars with dashboard cameras to help police officers record events as they happen and to track criminal activity.

MISSOURI

State lawmakers have voted to name a new Mississippi River bridge for the St Louis Cardinals baseball great Stan Musial and part of a highway for construction worker Andy Gammon, who died building the bridge.

NEVADA

State lawmakers are considering allowing motorcyclists and moped riders to drive between lanes when traffic grinds to a standstill, so long as they don't go too fast. Drivers would be permitted to go up to 10 mph faster than the rest of the traffic – up to a maximum of 30 mph.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Just in time for summer, Hampton Beach is raising the beach parking fees. It now costs \$2 per hour to park at a meter for the summer season. In Oct. it returns to \$1.

NEW JERSEY

Police and sheriff's officers in 12 towns have launched an 18-month Operation 130 Safe Passage program to try to make Route 130 safer for pedestrians. Thirteen pedestrians have been killed and more than 40 have been involved in motor vehicle accidents on the 22 1/2 mile road between 2007 and 2011.

As of May 23rd, drivers who use EPass will be able to head through New Hampshire's Hooksett Tolls on Interstate 93 at highway speeds without stopping

The Motor Vehicle Commission is seeking to curb fraud associated with handicapped parking. Placards will be redesigned, and placard holders will have to have their medical conditions re-certified every three years.

NEW MEXICO

Alamogordo city officials have decided not to prohibit drivers from texting or using cellphones while behind the wheel.

NEW YORK

The Statue of Liberty will reopen on July 4th. Liberty Island flooded during Superstorm Sandy on October 29th.

NORTH CAROLINA

The state Department of Transportation announced that ferries will run 30 trips each way between Ocracoke and Hatteras Islands daily through October 7th. Cedar Island and Swan Quarter ferries to and from Ocracoke started on May 21st.

OHIO

Legislation has been introduced to require that motor vehicles display only a single license plate on the rear of the vehicle. The bill has been referred to the House Transportation, Public safety and Homeland Security Committee for consideration. The bill would protect the designs contours of collector cars and relieve vehicle owners of the burden of having to create mounting holes on some fabricated and original bumpers. The measure is supported by SEMA.

The Department of Transportation reported 2,230 bridges are structurally deficient statewide, but there isn't money to fix them. The cost of bridge projects has grown from \$570 million in 2003 to a projected \$1 billion in 2014.

OREGON

Tens of thousands of immigrants living in Oregon without legal permission will be able to get four-year drivers licenses starting Jan. 1st under a bill given final approval by the House.

Rangers plan to remove about half of the 25 pay tubes at federal park sites along the coast. The tubes are used to collect day-use fees at sites in the Siuslaw National Forest and the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area, but they are being vandalized by thieves.

PENNSYLVANIA

Legislation has been reintroduced in Pennsylvania to extend the emissions inspection exception to vehicles never before registered in the state or any other jurisdiction for 10 years from the date of original registration. Current law only exempts new vehicles that have less than 5,000 on their odometer for one year after their first registration. The bill would still require that the newest 10 model year vehicles be subject to visual anti-tampering inspections for the presence of emission control components installed on the vehicle by the manufacturer.

The missing link in the bicycle trail connecting the Pittsburgh area to Washington, D.C. has opened. Ground was broken in Oct. 2012 on the final mile of the Great Allegheny Passage, a 14 mile bicycle trail from Pittsburgh to Cumberland, MD. That is where it links up with the Chesapeake & Ohio Towpath, which stretches to Washington, D.C.

RHODE ISLAND

The operator of the ferry between Bristol and Prudence Island has told local officials that the service will cease operations on Dec. 1, leaving island residents with no transportation to the mainland. Prudence Island Planning Committee Chairman Harry Sterling said that local residents are working together to put another ferry service in place.

TENNESSEE

Now that traffic cameras have been gone from the city of Red Bank for four months, officials are saying just how much they are not missed. Citizen complaints drove Red Bank to end its contract with a provider in January after six years and 69,000 citations. According to the Chattanooga Times Free Press, officials said the number of traffic crashes hasn't increased, there has been fewer citations issued and more traffic is coming into the city.

TEXAS

A new water taxi service across the Ship Channel near Corpus Christi is aimed to bolster tourism in the Sports Entertainment Arts District. Harbor Water Taxi will operate starting June 1st through the summer and run from the Congressman Solomon P. Ortiz International Center to the State Aquarium.

WEST VIRGINIA

Gov. Tomblin has signed a law effective July 9th allowing police to pull over motorists if the driver or passengers aren't wearing seat belts.

WYOMING

State lawmakers are looking at legislation that would keep repeat offenders to alcohol-related crimes out of jail and subject them instead to stringent testing. Under the 24/7 Sobriety Program, people convicted for the second or subsequent time of driving while impaired can avoid going to jail if they agree to take breath tests or wear a monitoring bracelet.

The Wyoming Game & Fish Dept. is proposing to ban motorboats on a 20 mile stretch of the Snake River south of Grand Teton National Park. The agency may ban jet skis on a 40 mile stretch downstream from the park.

WHAT SUUP HERE AND THERE

According to the Federal Highway Administration, females accounted for 50.5% of drivers in 2011. Male drivers accounted for 49.5%.

Auditors in Las Vegas estimated that taxi driver's overcharged passengers \$15 million last year by taking roundabout routes to and from the airport.

Great View! A former West Virginia fire tower built on a platform atop a 3,400 foot peak in the Seneca State forest will be available as a lodging venue starting in June. The Thorny Mountain tower cab's 14 x 14 living space will be available to rent for \$50 per night.

An article by Gary Stoller of the USAToday newspaper states that Chicago has the highest initial (meter turn on) taxi cab prices in the U.S. Honolulu has the highest estimated 5 and 10 mile trip taxi fares. The cheapest estimated fare for a 10 mile trip is Detroit. A 10 mile trip by taxi in Los Angeles will cost you \$36.50, but in Dallas, it will cost you \$22.55.

New summer rules in Myrtle Beach South Carolina began on May 1st. Pets and bicycles are allowed on the beach only before 10 a.m. and after 5 p.m. through Labor Day. Pets and bikes are allowed on the boardwalk from 5 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Plans to put permanent prefabricated concrete restrooms at Newport Rhode Island's Cliff Wall, has been put off after members of the City Council expressed reservations about the design.

Calling Huston Texas?? As of July 1st, the Huston area will get its fourth area code - 346 - to accommodate growth in the area.

Is it a lost art?? A survey of 500 car buyers by Lab42, found that 35% of the buyers do not know how to drive a manual transmission. It is not known if the 65% who say they do know how, can actually do it or just know how to do it.

**Larry Becker
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